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UNCLAS HARARE 001830

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR AF/S, AF/EX, CA FOR RHAWKINS
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JFRAZER
LONDON FOR CGURNEY
PARIS FOR CNEARY
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: FEW COMMERCIAL FARMERS EVICTED AS CFU PERCEIVES
EXTENSION OF DEADLINE

REF: A. A) HARARE 1827

[1](#)B. B) HARARE 1822

[1](#)1. (U) Summary. Pursuant to the August 9 deadline for the first wave of commercial farmers to abandon their homesteads, in one region police have confronted farmers on five separate properties, and in a second region another farmer faces forced eviction. Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) president David Hasluck states that his organization is extrapolating a new August 31 deadline for vacating the homesteads, based on President Mugabe's speech at Monday's Heroes' Day commemoration. Otherwise matters remain at an impasse. End summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) The four-day Heroes Day weekend, which followed the August 9 deadline for commercial farmers with compulsory acquisition notices to vacate their homesteads, passed with very few reports of GOZ action or confrontation. The CFU now estimates that of the 4500 farms under notice of acquisition, only about 1300 had section 8 orders which "matured" on August 9, and that the number of farms with "mature" section 8 orders would be increasing every day. CFU president David Hasluck believes that while many owners had chosen to be absent (on holiday or for safety reasons) over the previous weekend, owners of approximately 2500 listed farms have refused to vacate their properties despite the deadline. The hardline advocacy group Justice for Agriculture (JAG, ref tel A), on the other hand, estimates that over 60% of the owners of 6022 listed farms, along with staff and families, have remained on their farms despite the August 9 deadline. The discrepancies in the two sets of numbers result from the differences in unit numbers; while there are a total of 6148 separate title deeds, of which 6022 are under some notice of acquisition, many farms consist of multiple title deeds, with the average running 1.5 title deeds per farm. Nevertheless, JAG estimates that over 1.5 million people, mostly commercial farm workers and their families, are affected by the overhanging uncertainty.

[1](#)3. (SBU) In the Middle Save area in southeastern Zimbabwe, a group of five farmers who are reportedly growing a winter wheat crop were visited twice over the long weekend by an eviction force comprising police and representatives of the local land committee. According to David Hasluck, the newly appointed Zanu-PF member in charge of the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) in that area is being very aggressive in pursuing the perceived policies of his superiors. While Hasluck was reluctant to use the words "forced off their land," he did concede that the CFU had agreed that the farmers in question should not remain resident on the land as of Monday, although they were urged to continue farming until they were forcibly prevented. Additionally, in the Mazowe area approximately 30 km north of Harare, one farmer reported to the CFU that he is currently (1000 hours local time) facing an attempt at eviction, although it is not clear to the CFU whether that action is originating from police, GOZ officials, war vets, or settlers.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Hasluck stated that the CFU has extrapolated a "new" August 31 deadline for vacating homesteads from President Mugabe's Heroes Day speech on August 12 (septel), wherein Mugabe stated that newly settled farmers must be on their land by month's end in order to prepare the land for the coming season and the coming rains. Hasluck believes that the policy of the GOZ -- to the extent that there is one -- is to keep the remaining farmers in a heightened state of uncertainty by forcing a few random evictions per week, while simultaneously hoping that the farmers give in to the increasing pressure and abandon their property of their own accord.

[1](#)5. (SBU) Comment: Despite Mugabe's continued insistence that there will be no going back on his chaotic land reform program, the CFU continues to grasp at any glimmer of reprieve that its members can discern. Hasluck is likely correct in his assessment that evictions will occur in a random and representative fashion, although questions of who,

when and how are yet to be answered. End comment.
WHITEHEAD